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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Tuesday, October 22, 1940

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "WHEN HOMEMAKERS ASK QUESTIONS." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Today, I'm bringing you the answers to some of the questions you've sent me... special questions about vitamins--minerals--other food values. The answers come from nutritionists in the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Right here on top are two questions about vitamin C. The first writer says she has heard that oranges lose their vitamin C a few minutes after they are squeezed for juice. And she asks whether this is true.

In answer, I'm glad to report that orange juice does not lose vitamin C for some time after it is squeezed. So you can depend on oranges and orange juice as top notch sources of this important vitamin--especially during the winter when other fresh fruits and vegetables may be scarce. If you put orange juice in a covered container and keep it in the refrigerator--there is little loss of vitamin C until the second day.

The second woman writes, "I've been studying a list of foods that are rich in vitamin C. Why are canned tomatoes given right near the top--when other canned vegetables aren't even mentioned?"

Nutritionists answer by saying that fresh tomatoes are naturally richer in vitamin C than most other vegetables. And the acid of the tomatoes keeps the vitamin C from being destroyed when they are canned.

And here's another question about canned vegetables. This woman says, "During the winter I buy canned vegetables rather than fresh ones, because they are cheaper and it takes less fuel to cook them. Also I can't keep fresh vegetables on hand very

long. Now I am wondering whether the canned vegetables are as good for us as the fresh ones. Do they furnish all the food values we need?"

This is the answer given by the Bureau of Home Economics: "Canned vegetables have about the same food value that fresh vegetables have after they are cooked. But be sure to use the liquid in the cans. Serve it with the vegetables--or use it in making soups, stews, and gravies. This liquid contains minerals and some vitamins, which you won't want to waste if you're trying to make your food money go as far as possible. If you don't use fresh vegetables your diet may be low in vitamin C--so be sure to use generous amounts of citrus fruits and fresh or canned tomatoes.

"It's always a good plan to also have some raw fruits or vegetables in your meals each day. They furnish vitamins--and they give you variety in texture and flavor, so your meals are more interesting."

Another question comes from a woman who has been watching the food shopping news. She says, "I've been reading about the large supply of prunes--and feel that I ought to be serving them often. What food values will I get from prunes?"

And here's the answer: "Prunes are a good source of iron, they also provide some calcium.....And these are two minerals that you have to check carefully in planning your meals each day. Prunes also contribute some vitamin B_1 and some vitamin A to the diet. Aside from food values.....you'll do well to make use of prunes because they are a low-cost fruit--full of flavor and easy to keep on hand."

Here's a letter from another woman who tries to plan meals so her family will get all the food values they need. Her problem is to get the family to cooperate. She writes, "I can't get my husband to drink a pint of milk a day--as the diet plans recommend. I know he needs the milk for the calcium and other food values it contains. Can you give me any help?"

These are the suggestions offered. "If you can't get you husband to drink milk--why not use it in cooking, so he will eat the milk without realizing it.

Cream soups--sauces--scalloped dishes--custards--and puddings offer good ways to include milk in the daily diet.

"Of course American cheddar cheese--the yellow kind that you buy in slices--can also be a good source of calcium for adults. About 2 1/2 ounces--that's a little over one-eighth pound--will give you about the same amount of calcium as a pint of fluid milk. You may not be able to use cheese as the source of calcium every day, but you can use it often in sandwiches--Welsh rabbit--cheese souffle--and with scalloped vegetables."

And here's a last question--one that comes up again and again these days. "Is it necessary to supplement the diet with vitamins in concentrated form--such as pills and tablets?"

This is the answer that nutritionists give: "For normal, healthy persons it's best to depend on a wise selection of foods for the necessary vitamins. But fish-liver oils are an excellent source of citamins A and D for children, expectant mothers, and mothers who are nursing their babies. Otherwise, vitamin concentrates should be taken under the advice of a physician who knows the reason why the patient needs extra vitamins. He is the one to tell you what kind of concentrates to take and how much."

And that winds up our questions and answers on nutrition for today. But I'll have more for you soon.